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REFORMER AND ICONOCLAST

By WILLIAM J. BAER.

With original illustrations by William M. Chase and others.



From a painting by William M. Chase.

THE END OF THE SEASON.

predecessors of the greatest reputation, he may then assume the boldness and intrepidity of genius ; at any rate, he must not be tempted

“ . . . Euripides expressed to the Athenians, who criticised his works, ‘I do not compose,’ says he, ‘my works in order to be corrected by you, but to instruct you.’ It is true, to have a right to speak thus a man must be a Euripides. However, thus much may be allowed, that when an artist is sure that he is upon firm ground, supported by the authority and practice of his



*Drawn by
William M. Chase.
STUDY.*



Drawn by William M. Chase.

IN THE STUDIO.



From a painting by William M. Chase.

A LADY IN BLACK.

out of the right path by any tide of popularity that always accompanies the lower styles of painting."—SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

The subject of this sketch is so well known that nothing we might say of his life and struggles would be new. Nor shall the accompanying illustrations be enlarged upon. Let us rather consider how we may better appreciate the living presence of one who is at once a master in his art and in his capacity as an instructor. That individual or public whose love for music or painting is limited by the literary

part contained in it, or cannot justly discern which qualities are to be considered accessory, or even superfluous, in the work undertaken, will surely be robbed of much pleasure as well as instruction in viewing such art as has strong tendencies toward individual interpretation.

The ordinary conception of the public agrees on three points, viz., literary art ; topical songs, waltz music and



From a painting by William M. Chase.

ROBERT BLUM.

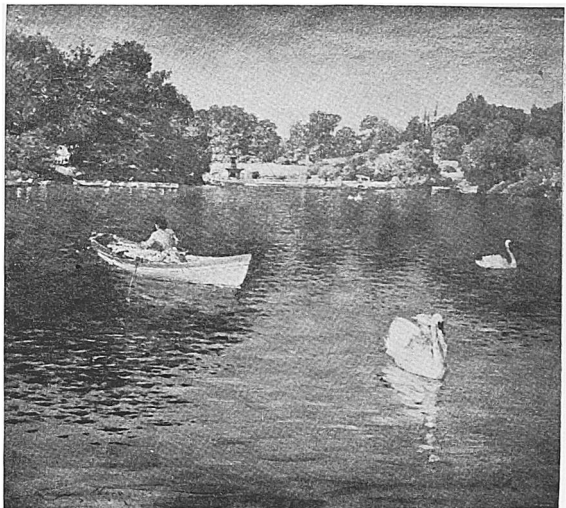
our views on art are rather apt to be too literary and out of balance to appreciate anything not descriptive. No one will deny that subjective matter cannot lend special interest. There is, however, no great art, nor will there be, which will *require* an explanatory text to aid its interpretation. The Venus of Melos is just as fine to us, without knowing what she may have represented. Michael Angelo's Moses is equally great, apart from its subject. Velasquez was Velasquez whether he painted Philip



From a painting by William M. Chase.

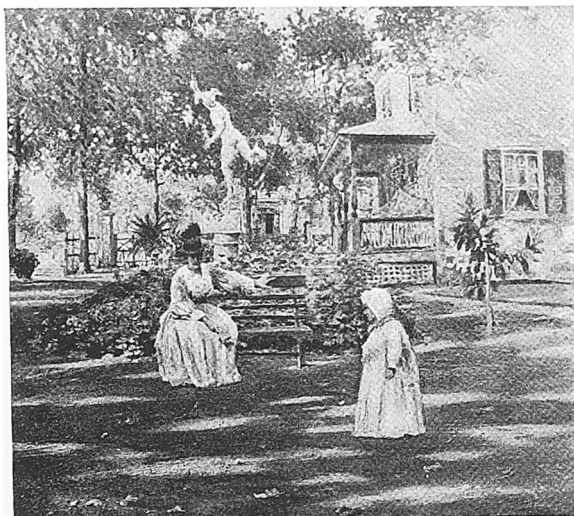
REFLECTION.

marches ; and the commonplaces in literature. Our early training in reading causes us to read too much and to see too little for ourselves ; or at least not to be wary of that which may follow a prejudice. Hence



From a painting by William M. Chase.

IN CENTRAL PARK.



From a painting by William M. Chase.

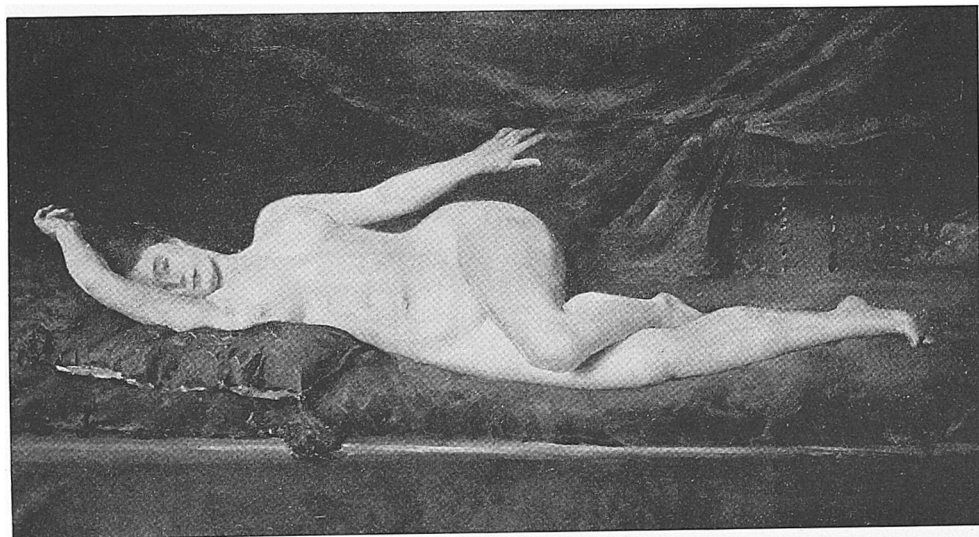
SUNLIGHT AND SHADOWS.

or a Spanish beggar. But does not the Sistine Madonna lose much of its hold when we rob it of its divine sentiment? Mr. Whistler's portrait of his mother moves us by a something—we sometimes think we know—but we don't worry about the why. In short, the domain of art is strongest where it depends on its own peculiar strength, and I hold that he who can manage his art in its own peculiar field, and allow kindred art to simply add and not supplant, is surely on neutral grounds. Mr. Chase has gone his own way, and



From a painting by William M. Chase.

THE LADY IN WHITE.



From a painting by William M. Chase.

A STUDY IN CURVES.

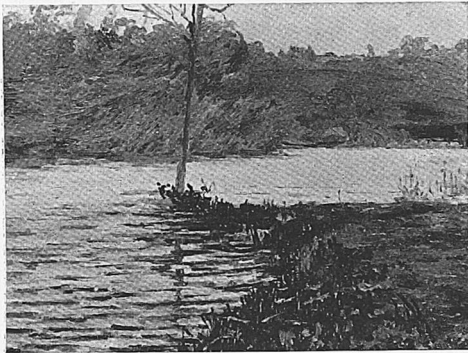
while he may have added he has never intruded. Because of his strong convictions as to his domain, he has been praised, and on the other hand raked over coals of literary fire. To do this is to rob Peter to pay Paul, so that we are all unhappier for the doing, losing much that is both beautiful and profitable to contemplate.

As suggested in the introductory quotation, Mr. Chase has looked neither right nor left, and has "arrived," even for some who once denied him his proper place. To-day he is successful in many ways. His sitters and patrons are people of judgment in art matters, who do



From a painting by Georgiana Howland.

A FLOWERY PATH.



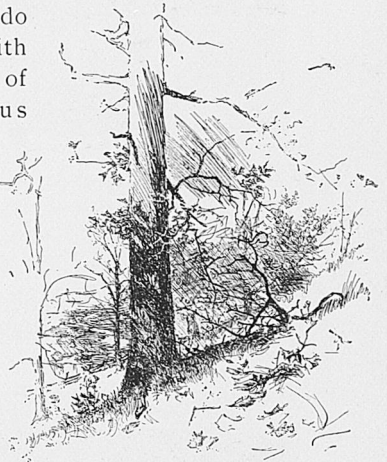
From a painting by Elizabeth Curtis.

A QUIET POOL.

not carry with them the air of the "generous patron." His landscapes have found a ready place in many collections of art. His studios are visited by promising talents, both men and women, anxious to learn something from their gifted master. And does not the summer school on the Shinnecock Hills assure us of his prowess? Furthermore, to hold and have held the high distinction of President of the Society of American Artists, is an honor second to none.

The art of Mr. Chase may be said to base its existence on form and color. It affects us more like music than any other kindred art. Those of us who are familiar with such musicians as Schumann or Händel can feel better what is meant when it is said that many appreciate but

do not carry with them the air of the "generous patron." His landscapes have found a ready place in many collections of art. His studios are visited by promising talents, both men and women, anxious to



Drawn by Howard Chandler Christy.

A LANDMARK.



From a painting by Howard Chandler Christy.

A SHINNECOCK GARDEN.

few quite understand. There are those masters who are matter-of-fact and scientific, and produce as successfully as the dreamers do. Händel wrote his "Messiah" as he wrote operas before it, in an apparently matter-of-fact way—why? because he could turn anything into music and had no need to await an inspiration.

Like them Mr. Chase possesses a freshness

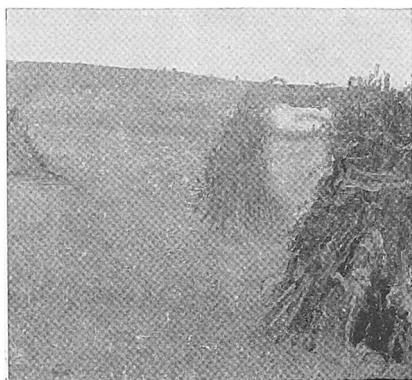
of spirit that is uncompromising in its convictions; always happiest in large and simple comprehension of the color schemes which he resolves into a unity of effect. Nothing seems to enter such work which could be dispensed with. As it is fresh, direct and elemental,



From a painting by Matilda A. Brownell.

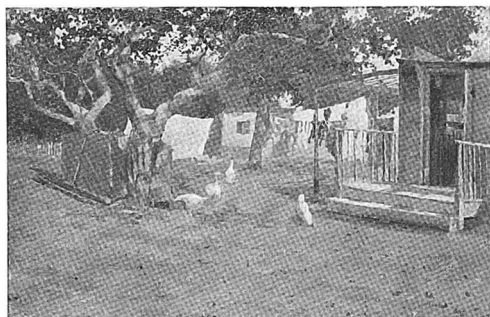
A SHINNECOCK MEADOW.

it is to the painter free from foreign support suggestive of any school but Nature's. While it is false to throw away that which modern impressionism has given us, it is death to the painter whose



From a painting by Ernest Meyer.

INDIAN SUMMER.



From a painting by Charles E. Langley.

WASH-DAY.



From a painting by Lydia Field Emmett.

WHERE WILD BIRDS SING.



From a painting by C. L. Washburn.

FLOWERS AND TREES.

power of absorbing other qualities cannot overcome its force enough to make it additional rather than supplanting or superseding. Mr. Chase has not forgotten anything he has learned in passing from his earlier to his present style. Too many of our talented men have, in latter years, made appalling changes of conviction; it has accentuated the worth of those who never forget that art and its phases are ever varying, and that no art is bettered by anything



From a painting by Jane Emmett.

ON SUMMER SANDS.



From a painting by Reynolds Beal.

ON SHINNECOCK BAY.

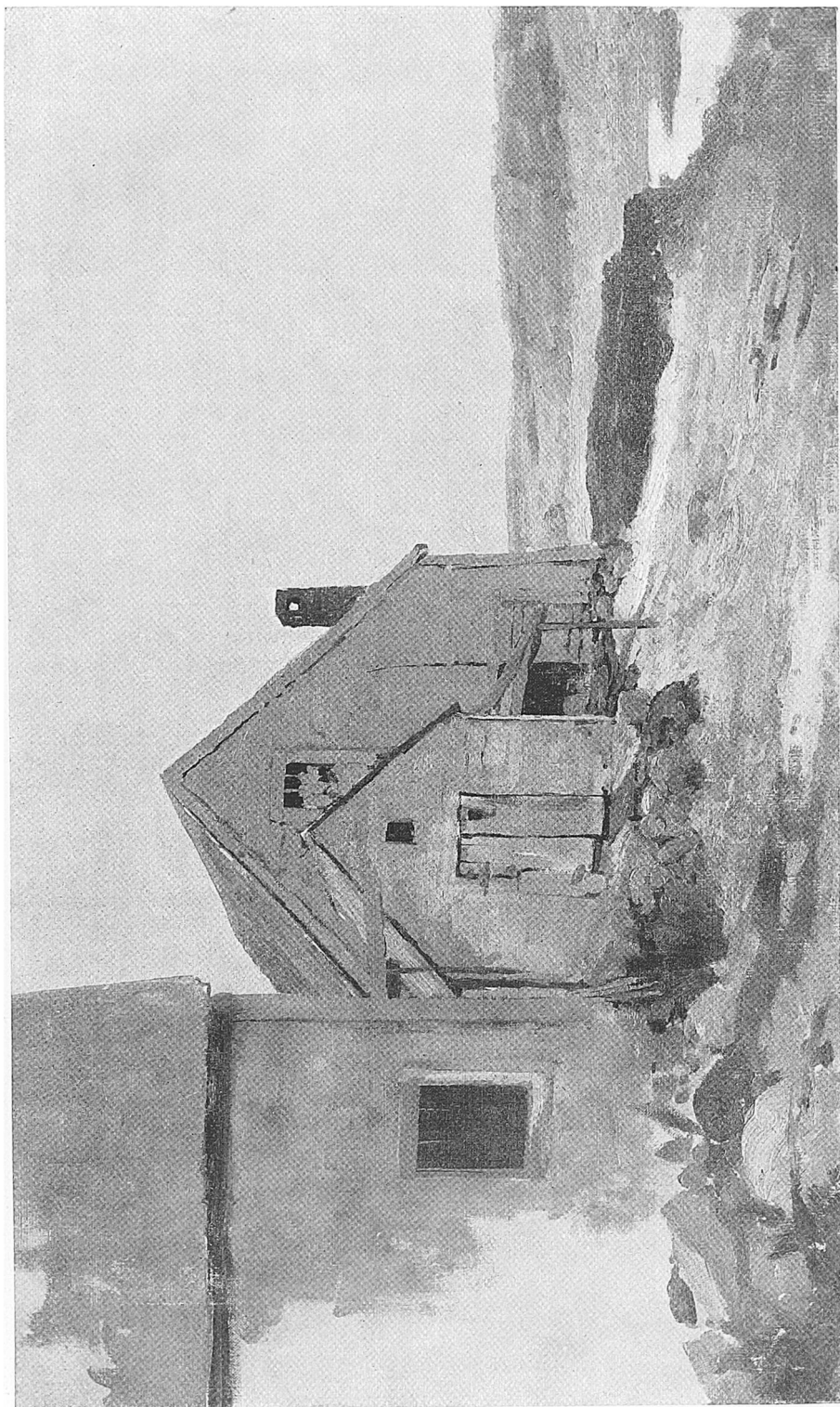
short of its broad and elemental truths. Impressionism and *plein-air*, so called, are truths—great truths—but surely not the only ones.

To Mr. Chase many things have an artistic value, for he is an ardent student of Nature in its every phase. Lavater said: "The enemy of Art is the enemy of Nature. Art is nothing but the highest sagacity and exertions of Human Nature; and what Nature will he honor who honors not the Human?"



From a painting by A. T. Millar.

THE CABBAGE PATCH.



"FISHING HOUSES AT OGUNQUIT, MAINE."